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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (9/25): CALL FOR A MEDIA AND
POLITICAL TRUCE AMONG PALESTINIAN FACTIONS

Main Stories:

Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas says that he is against any "militarized intifada or armed resistance," according to Al Ayyam's lead story. Citing remarks made to London-based Al-Hayat newspaper, Abbas is also quoted reiterating his position that he will accept any "Arab solution" for ending internal Palestinian division. The same article quotes PA Presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudaynah confirming that Abbas will meet with President Bush at the White House on September 25 and ask Bush to pressure Israel to halt settlement activities. Al Quds' front page expresses doubt that any tangible outcomes will come of the meeting, noting that Israeli internal politics have placed peace negotiations "on the backburner." Other front-page articles note that Abbas will deliver a speech before the UN General Assembly on September 25.

Al Quds leads with news about "American ideas" being proposed by the U.S. to bridge the gap between Israeli and Palestinian positions in peace negotiations. Citing Israeli daily Haaretz, Al-Quds states that Israel has told Washington that Israeli security concerns must be addressed in any final-status agreement with the Palestinians.

The dailies report that 20 international non-governmental-organizations will issue a report on September 25, condemning Israeli settlement activities and criticizing the Middle East Quartet for its "several failures" regarding the peace process and "on-the-ground" improvements for Palestinians. In related news, Al-Quds front-pages a report that the UN Human Rights Council will adopt the conclusions of the fact-finding mission headed by South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, which found that the 2006 Israeli military operations against Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip may be war crimes.

Al-Ayyam reports that the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLIC) issued a report following its September 24 meeting in New York, that expresses the concern of donor countries' over "Israeli restrictions" imposed on Palestinian movement. The report adds that Israeli practices have hindered the development of the Palestinian economy.

Front-page reports cite Israeli security sources in reporting about the arrest of East Jerusalemites by Israeli police on charges of killing two Israeli soldiers. The same reports quote Israeli police stating that there has been a "sharp increase in attacks carried out by East Jerusalem Arabs against Israelis."

BLOCK QUOTES:

¶1. Under the title, "A Comprehensive Truce, not an Escalation of Disputes, is a Must Before Launching Dialogue", independent Al-Quds argues in its main editorial (09/25): "The success of [internal Palestinian] dialogue does not depend on Egyptian intentions or... the increased support of the Arab League, but ultimately on Palestinian intentions and the seriousness with which parties are willing to confront challenges and accept their national obligations. One of the simplest measures that could be implemented would be a halt to [negative] media campaigns... yet the media campaigns have not stopped but have escalated along with political arrests including the arrest of Governor Osama Al-Farra, a Fatah delegate to the dialogue... There is another critical issue - the rising debate over how much time Abu Mazen [Abbas] has left in office... Does Hamas really believe that elections could be

JERUSALEM 00001792 002 OF 002

conducted in 60 days, amid all the internal divisions and disputes? And can the detained Palestinian Legislative Council chairman or his deputy really assume the role of president for an indefinite period?... We call for a comprehensive media and political truce that will allow for an environment to ensure the success of [internal] dialogue and put an immediate end to all empty rhetoric. Let us bring all points of dispute to the table of dialogue, so that the Cairo meeting does not fail."

¶2. Regular columnist Adli Sadiq of the official Al-Hayat Al-Jadida argues under the title "The Desire to Escape" (09/25): "Hamas is trying to escape [internal] dialogue and the Arab umbrella, which became a must after the Palestinians tore their own tent. Hamas is running away now because their last theoretical positions, which cannot materialize, could very well be exposed during the dialogue when the Arabs and Palestinians demand an answer of what Hamas wants at the strategic level? If the answer is a Palestine from river to sea [historical Palestine] then the next question would be when and how? The resistance-themed 'victorious' theoretical position is [Hamas'] language for public mobilization and their justification to accuse others of treason. This is what Hamas does not want to lose! They want a rule in Gaza that can make great promises in mosques, forums and media outlets, alienating others as if other factions would hate to have a complete Palestine from river to sea..... Dialogue is an absolute necessity to reach reconciliation on principals that guarantee that [the coup] will not be repeated..."

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